

## HOTEL/MOTEL INTERDICTION PROGI

### Abstract

The Colorado Springs Police Department has policed with the Community Policing Philosophy since the 1970's. Problem-Oriented Policing (POP) was incorporated into our Community Policing Strategy in 1992. One of the many POP Projects developed in 1998 with the assistance of the community was the Hotel/Motel Interdiction Program, which was designed to assist hotel/motel management with the continuing problem of criminal activity occurring on their properties. This project is an excellent example of our success in extending POP beyond patrol and throughout our agency.

The Metro Vice/Narcotics and Intelligence Division (Metro VNI) was formed as a multi-jurisdictional unit to provide investigation and enforcement resource, and information clearing house for vice, narcotics, organized crime, and criminal intelligence within the Fourth Judicial District of Colorado. Metro VNI is made up of members from the Colorado Springs Police Department, El Paso County Sheriffs Office, Manitou Springs Police Department, Fountain Police Department, Woodland Park Police Department, Teller County Sheriffs Office and the District Attorney's Office.

During 1997 and 1998, members of the Metro Vice/Narcotics and Intelligence Division noticed an increase in the number of patrol-initiated narcotics cases that were occurring in local hotels and motels throughout our jurisdiction. There also appeared to be an increase in the use of hotels and motels for the clandestine production of methamphetamine. During interviews with narcotic suspects, detectives were advised that individuals were using hotels to distribute their controlled substances in order to avoid having their personal property seized in the event of their arrest.

Detectives were also being informed through training they received that controlled substances were being distributed from hotels and motels, specifically along the Interstate 25 corridor.

In 1998, Metro VNI began to organize a training program for local hotel and motel management to assist them in identifying certain "indicators of drug activity." A list of indicators was completed for both housekeeping/maintenance and the registration desk employees of the local hotels and motels (See Attachment A). We designed a handout to first introduce the program to hotel/motel management, and also to list the indicators of drug activity that the hotel/motel could pass on to their employees. We then obtained a pager that is solely dedicated to the hotel/motel program. This pager number was given to local hotels and motels for them to use to contact a detective when they believed criminal activity was taking place upon their property.

During the program's inception, the goal was to identify the narcotics trafficking taking place in local hotels and motels. We have reorganized the program to also include prostitution as one of the criminal activities that we are targeting in local hotels and motels.

The Hotel/Motel Interdiction Program was a collaboration of the Colorado Springs Police Department Metro VNI Division and several local hotel/motel managers. The program was introduced to the hotel/motel management with the assistance of the Pikes Peak Lodging Association and the Manitou Chamber of Commerce.

# COLORADO SPRINGS POLICE DEPARTMENT HOTEL/MOTEL INTERDICTION PROGRAM

## **A. Introduction**

The Colorado Springs Police Department has been on the forefront of the Community Policing for many years. We incorporated the Community Policing Philosophy in our department in the 1970's. In 1992 we took it one step further and adopted Problem-Oriented Policing (POP) into our Community Policing efforts. Since then, we have had numerous POP projects in conjunction with the community, which have resulted in the reduction in calls for service, as well as enhanced the quality of life for the citizens.

## **B. Scanning**

Colorado Springs and the surrounding area is situated on the Interstate 25 corridor for north and southbound travel. There are several other highways that intersect through the Colorado Springs area. A local airport in Colorado Springs allows easy travel to anywhere in the country. All of this gives drug dealers easy access to area hotels and motels along the Interstate and near the airport.

Historically, drug trends on the West Coast eventually make their way to the Colorado Springs area. Metro VNI detectives have been made aware of individuals along the West Coast; Arizona, Utah, and Idaho, setting up clandestine laboratories in hotel and motel rooms. This allows them to manufacture methamphetamine without causing damage to their own personal property. Also, numerous motels in our area are converting to extended stay

motels and are equipped with stovetops and microwaves that can be used in the methamphetamine production.

On several occasions in the past, observant hotel and motel personnel have become aware of suspected drug dealers in their businesses. They have observed extensive foot traffic to particular rooms that may be making and/or receiving numerous telephone calls. When this occurred, they would call for a patrol officer to make a determination if there was illegal activity taking place. It was determined that a specialized unit could handle these situations and better evaluate the circumstances and conduct undercover operations when needed. Training and interviews with narcotics distributors help the Metro Vice/Narcotics and Intelligence Division to conclude that hotels and motels were being used for drug trafficking. There is no statistical data to support our conclusions at this time.

In conjunction with our Hotel and Motel Interdiction Program, Metro VNI established a partnership with local hotel and motel employees. This has branched out into a larger partnership with the Pikes Peak Lodging Association and Manitou Springs Chamber of Commerce.

#### C. Response

After discussing the problem of the distribution of narcotics in hotels and motels, it was determined that Metro VNI would have to use a low level response to reduce the possibility of harm to other patrons at the hotels. A low-level response would also minimize damage to hotel and motel properties.

Metro VNI obtained a pager that was solely dedicated to the Hotel/Motel Interdiction Program. A business card was designed to identify the Sergeant and lead detective who has organized the hotel/motel unit (See Attachment B). On that business card the 24-hour pager telephone number is listed so that hotel/motels have contact with the Colorado Springs Police Department on a 24-hour basis other than calling dispatch. This arrangement permits immediate involvement by specialists.

Traditionally, when the Colorado Springs Police Department would receive a call of suspected criminal activity at a hotel/motel, a uniformed police officer would respond and possibly make contact with the individual staying in the particular rooms. Metro VNI organized a method of response that would utilize undercover detectives. When a hotel or motel contacted a unit with suspected criminal activity taking place in a room, the lead detective would obtain as much information about the registered occupants of the room as possible. The detective would then conduct a background on the individual staying in the room. The detective would also obtain as many indicators of criminal activity from the hotel staff in order to obtain enough probable cause to obtain a warrant to conduct a search of the room. Detectives have also obtained trash from the room in order to conclude if there is criminal activity taking place.

If a warrant cannot be obtained, Metro VNI detectives work closely with the hotel and motel and one alternative plan is to conduct a knock and talk at the particular room. Detectives make contact with the residents of the room and

identify themselves as police officers, advising the occupants that it is believed that criminal activity is taking place. The detectives attempt to obtain a consent to search the room.

A second method of investigation is allowing the individuals to check out of the hotel room. Upon checking out of the room, the hotel staff contacts Metro VNI and we respond to search for evidence of criminal activity in the room. If evidence is found, an arrest warrant can be done for the occupant. If a warrant is not completed, a list has been compiled of suspects that have stayed in motel rooms. When they arrive at a different motel or return to the same motel to conduct criminal activity, we use that in our Probable Cause at a later date.

If a warrant is obtained for a particular room, we respond with a low-level response. We have conducted surveillance of individuals after obtaining a search warrant for the room in order to assure that they are away from the hotel when the search warrant is executed. This allows detectives to execute the search warrant without having to make forced entry into the room, causing damage, at which time the hotel/motel management may never contact the unit again.

#### **D. Analysis**

Metro VNI does not have any statistical data to show how many calls for service on narcotics complaints were handled by patrol officers during the past years. Metro Vice/Narcotics and Intelligence Division based their decision to organize a hotel/motel unit on the fact that during interviews with narcotic suspects, we were advised that narcotics were being both manufactured and distributed through the

local hotels and motels. We had also attended several training sessions where we were advised that on other occasions, hotels and motels were being utilized by narcotics distributors to sell their product. Metro VNI had also responded to several instances where patrol had made contact with narcotics dealers in the hotels and motels.

It was discovered that narcotics dealers were using local hotels and motels in order to protect their personal belongings in the event of an arrest. Metro VNI has been very diligent in utilizing the local public nuisance statutes in order to seize possessions of narcotics distributors. Clandestine methamphetamine producers have also utilized hotels and motels to manufacture methamphetamine to reduce the risk of damage to their own personal property. The clandestine manufacturers have also learned that numerous local hotels and motels have cook tops and microwaves, which can be used in the production of methamphetamine. We have had instances where hotels and motels have been damaged through the production of methamphetamine on their property.

#### E. Assessment

The key to determining success or failure of the POP project is to see if it is producing desired outcomes or goals of the program. In this case, one of the goals of the program was to reduce the amount of controlled substances being distributed through local hotels and motels. A second goal was to create a working relationship with employees of the local hotels and motels and members of the Colorado Springs Police Department.

The program has appeared to be effective in that local hotel and motel management staff has contacted Metro VNI on several occasions with possible suspected criminal activity occurring in their establishments. The hotel/motel unit has already conducted at least two search warrants where the methamphetamine laboratory was set up in a motel room. We have also conducted several surveillances on individuals in motel rooms to determine if criminal activity is taking place. Several felony arrests have been made through the cooperation of hotel/motel personnel with the Colorado Springs Police Department. This program is a continuing program and has not been in existence long enough to fully evaluate and assess what effect it has made in the community. It is already apparent that from the number of arrests at hotels and motels, that the amount of narcotics being distributed in the Colorado Springs area has been reduced.

**F. Agency and Officer Information**

The Colorado Springs Police Department has been using Community Policing for many years. We developed department directives on Community-Oriented Policing in 1988. This procedure was amended in 1992 to reflect our emphasis on problem solving as a strategy for ongoing Community Policing Philosophy. The directives contained definitions, problem-solving models, information on resource availability and use, and a generic survey instrument designed to gather information and promote positive proactive contacts between the public and the police.

In 1992, Sand Creek, one of the three geographically defined divisions of the Colorado Springs Police Department, began the implementation of a pilot project, and nine months later CSPD adopted its *Total Problem-Oriented Policing* strategy. The program began as a dissemination of CSPD empowerment cards and entails a diverse set of problem-oriented tactics, organizational decentralization, and community involvement activities.

In 1994 the Colorado Springs Police Department Community-Oriented Policing strategy was studied by an assessment team for the **Jefferson Institute for Justice Studies**, which reports on community policing programs across the nation. The Institute's Executive Director, Joan E. Jacoby, stated:

*"The Colorado Springs Police Department has developed one of the best integrated Community Policing strategies in the United States. By giving all police officers and personnel a broader and more positive responsibility to their duties, neighborhood problems are more quickly identified and more flexible solutions are possible".*

In January 1995, Herman Goldstein (author of *Problem-Oriented Policing*, 1990) wrote a letter to Police Chief Lome C. Kramer complimenting him on our community based policing strategies:

*/ was especially impressed by the monograph (Problem-Oriented Policing in the CSPD) that you and Deputy Chief Pat McElderry authored. It presents a very comprehensive picture of your program and reflects a superb grasp of the many issues and the concepts with which some of us have been struggling for years. I was struck by the varying levels of problems to which you reply in the POP concepts.*

The Colorado Springs Police Department has adopted Community-Oriented Policing as our overall philosophy (what we believe) and Problem-

Oriented Policing (how we put this philosophy into practice). Our five-year strategic plan, updated each year, incorporates Community-Oriented Policing goals and objectives.

In 1993, a 16-hour course was developed on Problem-Oriented Policing. A team of department managers conducted two "Train the Trainer" courses for all supervisors and Master Patrol Officers. Supervisors then trained all personnel in their prospective divisions in the principles of problem solving.

Recruit officers were given 14-hours of training on the departments Problem-Oriented Policing concept in the Colorado Springs Police Department Academy. During the Field Training Program recruits are required to use community oriented policing strategies in problem solving.

In the Colorado Springs Police Department Metro VNI SOP on Community/Problem-Oriented Policing (See Attachment C), problem solving is the primary strategy of Community/Problem-Oriented Policing. Attention is directed towards finding a permanent solution to a problem by identifying the underlying conditions and correcting causes instead of just responding to calls for service and handling the specific situation. A four-step decision-making model is used by the Colorado Springs Police Department officers: 1) Scanning, 2) Analysis, 3) Response, 4) Assessment. This model serves as a systems approach to identify a problem, conduct quantitative and qualitative analysis, formulate and implement a solution, and evaluate its effectiveness through feedback.

A Problem-Oriented Policing Computer Database was created and placed at each Division Command. This database assists officers in analyzing calls-for-service and identifying problem locations. Analysis allows officers to apply problem-solving tactics with community members to targeted areas.

The Colorado Springs Police Department is decentralized into three Division Commands: Gold Hill, Sand Creek and Falcon. Each Division has a Neighborhood Policing Unit (NPU) that focuses on specific community problems. All NPU officers' primary duties are to initiate close citizen contacts through walking beats, business liaison, bicycle patrol and other methods to interdict emerging crime problems. The Department has experienced remarkable success with these units in reducing gang, vice, prostitution, drug and other crime problems. There is a crime prevention officer assigned to each NPU unit to provide education to citizens, as well as help develop solutions to issues that arise in the community.

The Colorado Springs Police Department was one of the original ICAP (Integrated Criminal Apprehension Program) sites in the late 1970's, and has a strong philosophy of using data and analysis to guide decisions, both managerial and operational. A decentralized Crime Analysis Unit, linked to central computer information databases, tracks target crimes, conducts traffic analysis, identifies crime trends, and provides modus operandi information to support police patrol and investigations.

Members of the Metro VNI used resources available to them internally, as well as externally, to assess the community issue of controlled substances being

distributed through local hotels and motels. In this projection, existing manpower was utilized to further enhance the community policing efforts of the Metro Vice/Narcotics and Intelligence Division. The Colorado Springs Police Department remains committed to the citizens we serve. Involving the citizens in issues that affect the community benefits the police department, as well as the community. We recognize that together we can make our community a place which people are proud to call home.

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# ATTACHMENT A



POLICE DEPARTMENT  
Lorne C. Kramer  
Chief of Police

# CITY OF COLORADO SPRINGS

The Colorado Springs Police Department Metro Vice/Narcotics and Intelligence Division is dedicated to serving the community. In an effort to work with the community, we are requesting the assistance of hotels and motels within El Paso and Teller Counties.

Over the past few years the Colorado Springs area has been inundated by persons who are transporting large quantities of controlled substances to and through our community. Interstate 25 is used by narcotic traffickers as a direct route to other areas of the country. Colorado Springs is a city where traffickers stop on their way to other locations. Not only do traffickers use the interstate for travel, they also use our airport.

It is our intention to make the hotels and motels in El Paso and Teller Counties aware of the narcotics trafficking problems facing our community. We hope the attached indicators of criminal activity will enlighten hotel/motel personnel as to what we believe are indications of a narcotic trafficker. We are hoping to work together in deterring traffickers from infesting our community with controlled substances.

As mentioned in the "Indicators of Drug Activity", one indicator by itself does not indicate a guest is a drug trafficker. A number of indicators would suggest that an individual may be involved in drug trafficking. If you suspect an individual is a drug trafficker, please notify us by paging us at 327-4872. Someone will contact you to determine if an investigation will be conducted.

Thank you for your assistance.

Captain Kenneth Bayens  
Metro Vice/Narcotics and Intelligence Division



## TINHCATORS OF CRIMINAL ACTIVITY

### HOUSEKEEPING/MAINTENANCE

- Guests who refuse daily cleaning. Frequently use the "DO NOT DISTURB" sign.
- Guests who seldom leave the room, even for meals.
- Guests who bag their own trash and place it outside the room.
- Unusual odors coming from inside the room.
- Unusual items in the room, to include:
  - Scales and balances
  - Weapons and ammunition
  - Scalable plastic bags
  - Cut or folded magazine pages
  - Rubber bands
  - Unusual containers
  - Cellular telephones
  - Dryer sheets
  - Dye rape
  - Hot plate
  - Pans with powder residue
  - Empty Luggage
  - Pagers
  - Large amounts of currency
- Guest requests the use of an iron and asks to keep it an extended period of time.
- Guest makes room alterations, such as:
  - Mirrors off of walls
  - Wet towels folded under bathroom doors
  - Towels covering smoke detectors
  - Beds off of frame
- You discover bundles, packages, balloons wrapped with tape or string

Remember, guests who engage in the above listed activities may or may not be involved with criminal acts. The Hotel/Motel Unit requests you take NO ACTION other than to observe and report the information to us. If you observe persons exhibiting a combination of these indicators, please notify your supervisor immediately.

## INDICATORS OF CRIMINAL ACTIVITY

### REGISTRATION DESK

- Individuals arriving from source states:
  - Texas
  - California
  - New Mexico
  - Arizona
  - Utah
  - Florida
  - New York
  - Mexico
- Guest displays large amount of currency/ when paying for rooms, meals and other expenses.
- Guests who are observed carrying pagers and cellular telephones.
- Guests who arrive without having reservations and rent on a day to day basis.
- Auto license plates furnished at the time of registration that do not coincide with those displayed on the vehicle.
- Guests who are evasive as to their length of stay.
- Individuals carrying little, or no luggage.
- Guests who rent two or more rooms, usually want connecting.
- V. Guests using a pay phone in or near the hotel/motel after checking in.
  - Guests who order high potency alcoholic beverages.
  - Guests who have frequent visitors who stay for short periods of time.
  - Guests who often refuse maid service and continually use the "DO NOT DISTURB" sign.
  - Guests who receive a large volume of telephone calls to their room.
  - Guests who give local home addresses upon registration.
  - Individuals who come in and pay for rooms for individuals other than themselves.

# ATTACHMENT B

# ATTACHMENT C